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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001454

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2008

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES SECURITY WITH INTERIOR
MINISTER

Classified by Ambassador W. Robert Pearson; reasons 1.5 b and
d.

11. (C) Summary: Interior Minister Aksu told Ambassador that Americans in Turkey do not face a greater threat following Parliament's failure to approve the stationing of U.S. troops. Aksu said the GOT will continue to provide 24-hour security to the U.S. diplomatic community, and will maintain order during anti-war protests. Ambassador requested random vehicle checks on a street abutting Embassy grounds; Aksu said he will direct police to review the issue. Ambassador said the U.S. will continue to work closely with the GOT. End Summary.

12. (U) Ambassador thanked Interior Minister Aksu during a March 6 meeting for the excellent security provided by police to the entire American diplomatic community. Ambassador said he had met March 4 with Embassy spouses, who wanted to know whether Parliament's March 1 vote failing to approve the stationing of U.S. troops in Turkey has heightened security risks for Americans. Ambassador said he would like to hear Aksu's views. Aksu said he does not believe the parliamentary vote will lead to an increased threat against Americans. The longstanding friendship between Turkey and the U.S. will continue. In Turkey, as in many countries, there are staunchly anti-American groups, but they are marginal and insignificant. Some violent groups, particularly KADEK (formerly PKK) are trying to manipulate anti-war protests for their own ends. The GOT will allow people to express their views, but will maintain control, as it did March 1 when police prevented demonstrators from marching to the Parliament building. The GOT will continue to provide 24-hour security to the Embassy community.

13. (U) Aksu said the media and elements of the GOT are distorting the Iraq issue, depicting the resolution on U.S. troop deployment as a pro-U.S., pro-war measure. In fact, the resolution supports Turkey's interests. Aksu said he will continue to make this argument to Cabinet members and parliamentarians. Ambassador said he appreciated the Government's courage in taking the controversial resolution to a vote. The U.S. remains a friend and ally of Turkey, and will continue to work closely with the GOT.

14. (C) Ambassador said there is one gap in the otherwise excellent security around the Embassy grounds -- the lack of vehicle inspection on Paris Caddesi, which runs very close to some Embassy facilities. The GOT has installed a barrier on Paris, but it is kept in the upright position and random inspections are not being conducted. The image of the unused barrier could cause someone to think there is an opening that could be exploited for an attack. Random vehicle inspection would have a critical deterrent effect. Aksu said he will direct the Ankara Police Chief to review the situation and contact Embassy RSO. The GOT will take the necessary measures to protect the Embassy. Ambassador thanked Aksu and said he might have to seek increased GOT security assistance in the event of war in Iraq.

PEARSON